

CLAIMS

1. Electronic money having validity corresponding to cash, wherein

5 a security of said money can be changed by an issuing source or an administrator.

2. Electronic money according to claim 1, wherein said security is a key for encryption, a key length of said key, an error detection and/or correction code, or a valid term.

3. Electronic money according to claim 1, wherein said change is performed at every predetermined period.

4. Electronic money according to claim 1, wherein said change is performed in accordance with necessity of said issuing source or said administrator.

5. Electronic money according to claim 1, wherein after completion of said change, the security before said change is invalidated after the elapse of a predetermined period.

20 6. An electronic use right which enables software such as reproduction or the like of contents to be used, wherein

a security of said electronic use right can be changed by an issuing source or an administrator.

25 7. An electronic use right according to claim 6, wherein said security is a key for encryption, a key length of said key, an error detection and/or correction code, or a valid term.

8. An electronic use right according to claim 6, wherein said change is performed at every predetermined period.

9. An electronic use right according to claim 6, wherein said change is performed in accordance with 5 necessity of said issuing source or said administrator.

10. An electronic use right according to claim 6, wherein after completion of said change, the security before said change is invalidated after the elapse of a predetermined period.

11. An electronic use right according to claim 6, wherein said software is at least one of audio data, video data, still image data, character data, computer graphics data, game software, and computer program.

12. A charging system in which when software which was compression encoded and/or encrypted is distributed and the user decodes the distributed software, a charging process is performed through electronic money which the user possesses, wherein

20 a security for the electronic money can be changed by an issuing source or an administrator.

13. A charging system according to claim 12, wherein said security is a key for encryption, a key length of said key, an error detection and/or correction code, or a valid term.

25 14. A charging system according to claim 12, wherein said change is performed at every predetermined period.

15. A charging system according to claim 12, wherein said change is performed in accordance with necessity of said issuing source or said administrator.

5 16. A charging system according to claim 12, wherein after completion of said change, the security before said change is invalidated after the elapse of a predetermined period.

10 17. A charging system according to claim 12, wherein said issuing source or said administrator buys the electronic money or an electronic use right which the user possesses or exchanges it to valid electronic money or electronic use right.

15 18. A charging system according to claim 12, wherein a request for the electronic money or an electronic use right is generated at a timing when a result of the decoding by the user reaches a range permitted by the electronic money or the electronic use right.

20 19. A charging system according to claim 12, wherein said software is at least one of audio data, video data, still image data, character data, computer graphics data, game software, and computer program.

25 20. A charging system in which when software which was compression encoded and/or encrypted is distributed and the user decodes the distributed software, a charging process is performed through an electronic use right which the user possesses, wherein

a security for the electronic use right can be

changed by an issuing source or an administrator.

21. A charging system according to claim 20, wherein said security is a key for encryption, a key length of said key, an error detection and/or correction code, or a valid term.

22. A charging system according to claim 20, wherein said change is performed at every predetermined period.

23. A charging system according to claim 20, wherein said change is performed in accordance with necessity of said issuing source or said administrator.

24. A charging system according to claim 20, wherein after completion of said change, the security before said change is invalidated after the elapse of a predetermined period.

25. A charging system according to claim 20, wherein said issuing source or said administrator buys electronic money or the electronic use right which the user possesses or exchanges it to valid electronic money or electronic use right.

26. A charging system according to claim 20, wherein a request for electronic money or the electronic use right is generated at a timing when a result of the decoding by the user reaches a range permitted by the electronic money or the electronic use right.

27. A charging system according to claim 20, wherein said software is at least one of audio data, video data, still image data, character data, computer graphics data,

gamma software, and computer program.

28. A charging system which operates by using electronic money or an electronic use right, wherein a security for the electronic money or electronic use right is checked, and

when a result of said security check indicates NG, at least either a stop of the operation of the system or a notification showing that the result of said security check indicates NG is performed.

29. A charging system according to claim 28, wherein said security check is a check of a result of a decoding of an encryption, a result of an error detection and/or correction, or a valid term.

30. A charging system according to claim 28, wherein said security check is performed by checking whether the remaining electronic money or electronic use right is in a legal state after completion of the decoding or not.

31. A charging system according to claim 28, wherein said notification is made to an issuing source or an administrator of the electronic money or the electronic use right.

32. A charging system according to claim 28, wherein said notification is made to the user.

33. A charging system in which when software which was compression encoded and/or encrypted is distributed and the user decodes said distributed software, a charging process is performed through electronic money or an

electronic use right which the user possesses, wherein  
a security for the electronic money or the  
electronic use right is checked, and  
when a result of said security check indicates  
5 NG, at least either a stop of the operation of the system  
or a notification showing that the result of said security  
check indicates NG is performed.

34. A charging system according to claim 33, wherein  
said security check is a check of a result of a decoding  
of an encryption, a result of an error detection and/or  
correction, or a valid term.

35. A charging system according to claim 33, wherein  
said security check is performed by checking whether the  
remaining electronic money or the electronic use right is  
in a legal state after completion of the decoding or not.

36. A charging system according to claim 33, wherein  
said notification is made to an issuing source or an  
administrator of the electronic money or the electronic use  
right.

20 37. A charging system according to claim 33, wherein  
said notification is made to the user.

38. An information processing apparatus in which  
when distributed software which was compression encoded  
and/or encrypted is decoded, a charging process is  
25 performed through electronic money or an electronic use  
right, wherein

a security for the electronic money or the

electronic use right is checked, and

when a result of said security check indicates NG, at least either a stop of the decoding of the software or a notification showing that the result of said security check indicates NG is performed.

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39. An information processing apparatus according to claim 38, wherein said security check is a check of a result of a decoding of an encryption, a result of an error detection and/or correction, or a valid term.

40. An information processing apparatus according to claim 38, wherein said security check is performed by checking whether the remaining electronic money or electronic use right is in a legal state after completion of the decoding or not.

41. An information processing apparatus according to claim 38, wherein said notification is made to an issuing source or an administrator of the electronic money or the electronic use right.

42. An information processing apparatus according to claim 38, wherein said notification is made to the user.

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43. A reproducing method of contents data, comprising the steps of:

25 checking a security for an electronic use right when compressed and/or encrypted contents data is reproduced;

stopping the reproduction of said contents data when said electronic use right is invalid as a result of

5 said security check; and

5 performing the reproducing process of said contents data and consuming said electronic use right when said electronic use right is valid as a result of said security check.

44. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 43, wherein when said electronic use right is valid as a result of said security check, whether said electronic use right of an amount necessary for the reproducing process of said contents data remains or not is discriminated, and when said electronic use right of the amount necessary for the reproducing process of said contents data does not remain, the reproducing process of said contents data is executed.

10 45. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 44, wherein if it is determined that said electronic use right of the amount necessary for the reproducing process of said contents data remains, the reproducing process of said contents data is executed and said electronic use right is consumed.

20 46. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 43, wherein the consumption of said electronic use right is performed on the basis of a charge condition in subordinate data associated with said contents data.

25 47. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 43, wherein said electronic use right includes data regarding a header and at least valid start year/month/day,

data indicative of a kind of encryption, and data regarding the electronic use right and has an error correction code.

48. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 43, wherein when it is determined that said electronic use right is invalid as a result of said security check, a management organization for managing said electronic use right is notified of such a fact.

5 49. A reproducing method of contents data, comprising the steps of:

    checking a security for an electronic use right which is used in a charging process that is executed when compressed and/or encrypted contents data is reproduced;

    stopping the reproduction of said contents data when said electronic use right is invalid as a result of said security check; and

    performing the reproducing process of said contents data and the charging process on the basis of said electronic use right when said electronic use right is valid as a result of said security check.

20 50. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 49, wherein when said electronic use right is valid as a result of said security check, whether said electronic use right of an amount necessary for the reproducing process of said contents data remains or not is discriminated, and when said electronic use right of the amount necessary for the reproducing process of said contents data does not remain, the reproducing process of said contents data is

executed.

51. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 50, wherein if it is determined that said electronic use right of the amount necessary for the reproducing process of said contents data remains, the reproducing process of said contents data is executed and the charging process is executed on the basis of said electronic use right.

52. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 49, wherein the charging process based on said electronic use right is executed on the basis of a charge condition in subordinate data associated with said contents data.

53. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 49, wherein said electronic use right includes data regarding a header and at least valid start year/month/day, data indicative of a kind of encryption, and data regarding the electronic use right and has an error correction code.

54. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 49, wherein when it is determined as a result of said security check that said electronic use right is invalid, a management organization for managing said electronic use right is notified of such a fact.

55. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 49, wherein when said electronic use right is restored, an old electronic use right is replaced with a new electronic use right.

56. A reproducing method of contents data according to claim 43, wherein when said electronic use right is restored, data regarding a reproduction history of the contents data reproduced when said electronic use right is restored is transmitted to a management organization for managing said electronic use right.

57. A reproduction control method comprising the steps of:

storing an electronic use right purchased from a management organization into a memory in a player;

checking a security for said electronic use right which is used in a charging process which is executed when compressed and/or encrypted contents data is reproduced by the player;

stopping the reproduction of said contents data when said electronic use right is invalid as a result of said security check; and

20 performing the reproducing process of said contents data and executing the charging process on the basis of said electronic use right when said electronic use right is valid as a result of said security check.

58. A reproduction control method according to claim 57, wherein when said electronic use right is restored, an old electronic use right is replaced with a new electronic use right.

25 59. A reproduction control method according to claim 57, wherein when said electronic use right is restored, data

regarding a reproduction history of the reproduced contents data is transmitted to said management organization for managing said electronic use right.

60. A reproduction control method according to claim 59, wherein when said reproduction history exceeds a predetermined permission amount, said management organization inhibits the reproduction of the contents data which is executed by said player.

61. A reproduction control method according to claim 60, wherein said management organization further collects the electronic use rights stored in a memory of said player.